

Nigel Ridgway

Nigel Ridgway has been an active member of the South Australian Division, Engineering Heritage and History Committee since 1999 and was its Chairman from 2000 to 2006. He was also a member of the National Board of Engineering Heritage Australia from 2000 to 2006.

In 2001 Nigel played a leading role in the awarding of National Engineering Landmarks to the River Murray Locks, the Goolwa Barrages, the East-West Telegraph and the Trans-Australia Railway. He also helped coordinate the 2001 visit to Australia of members of the Newcomen Society.

Nigel represented Engineers Australia on the History Council of South Australia when it was formed in 2004 and later became its Vice President. He has made energetic and valuable contributions to the Council, helping it achieve a strategic focus on its activities and also prepare for the forthcoming 175th Anniversary of South Australia in 2011. He was chosen to be the Council's South Australian representative on the Federation of Australian Historical Societies and is still currently a Councillor.

For many years Nigel's work has taken him to remote parts of Australia and he never missed an opportunity to pursue enquires about the engineering relics his well-trained eye spotted. He used this knowledge in papers for the 2007 and 2009 Engineering Heritage Conferences; in co-authoring a heritage recognition nomination for the Umberumberka Waterworks (about 30 kilometres west of Broken Hill); and in several articles for the Bulletin of the International Stationary Steam Engine Society.

Nigel has a Bachelor of Engineering (Mechanical) and was elected a Fellow of the Institution of Engineers in 2005. Recently he has undertaken a doctorate at the University of Adelaide, investigating the wear of gland seals in slurry pumps, and submitted his thesis early in 2009.

Nigel is also involved in the practical aspects of preserving our engineering heritage. He owns and has restored a number of stationary engines, an interest he developed when his father started to collect antique tractors and farm machinery.

Despite an intensely busy life, Nigel always has time for one more project and to explore sites to find hidden treasures and bits of information. He has been a tireless worker for the nation's engineering heritage.

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